

# COMMISSION “INSPECTING” RELICS CUTS LOCKS TO KIEV CAVES, ORTHODOX MONKS REFUSE TO BE PART OF BLASPHEMY

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*pravlife.org*

A state commission to “inspect” the incorrupt relics of the Kiev Caves Lavra arrived at the monastery this morning.

The group, consisting of employees of the Ministry of Culture, the state-operated Kiev Caves Museum-Preserve, and various specialists, took an angle grinder to the locks on the buildings leading to the Near and Far Caves, reports [Orthodox Life](#).

They replaced the locks on the buildings, thus barring the monks of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church who rebuilt and cared for the monastery over the past 30 years.

The commission was created by order of the Ministry of Culture on [March 5](#), tasked with checking the “presence of the remains of saints in the tombs of the Near and Far Caves of the Kiev Caves Lavra National Preserve,” and “determining the historical and scientific value of the remains of the saints.” Items identified as “cultural values” are to be catalogued.

According to the [Union of Orthodox Journalists](#), they even plan to take samples for DNA testing.

The Caves are home to the incorrupt relics of more than 120 saints.

According to the monastery’s lawyer, Archpriest Nikita Chekman, the Orthodox monks refused to participate in the work of the commission, considering it a blasphemy to “inspect” the relics as “cultural values.”

“After reviewing the [Ministry of Culture’s] order itself and communicating with commission members during the negotiation process, the monastery brotherhood unanimously and with the blessing of His Beatitude Metropolitan Onuphry of Kiev and All Ukraine decided not to participate in the work of this commission,” [Fr. Nikita explained](#).

He continued:

Why? Because the commission includes a number of scientists, doctors, including anatomists, histologists, embryologists, and in particular, a doctor of veterinary sciences, a member of the Pirogov Commission for re-embalming bodies, etc. That is, the essence of the inspection is to conduct some unclear research on God's holy saints whose holy incorruptible relics are located in the Caves of the Kiev Caves Lavra.

For almost 1,000 years, the monks of the Holy Dormition-Kiev Caves Lavra have been taking care of the holy relics, celebrating Divine services, and the faithful have been reverently venerating the relics of God's holy saints. During the Soviet era, the Church was removed from the custody of the holy relics, but at the end of the last century, historical justice was restored—the holy relics of God's saints were returned to the Church, and the Church has since been fulfilling its obedience and duty [to preserve the remains of the saints].

But we see that currently some incomprehensible things are happening, so the monks have decided that it's impossible to participate in these blasphemous actions.

Furthermore, according to Fr. Nikita, considering that several court cases are still underway concerning the use of the territories of the Upper and Lower Lavra, the Ministry of Culture's actions are actually illegal.

"Therefore, the Lavra brotherhood made the appropriate decision," he said, noting that further appeals will be brought to the courts.

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